



State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

******TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK OP-ED******

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The future is in the hands of teachers

Celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week May 7-13, 2006

By State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster

Our young people—tomorrow’s scientists, writers, inventors, and citizens—learn lessons they’ll need for the future in classrooms throughout our state each school day.

The responsibility of educating students makes teaching one of the most important jobs there is. Teachers make a difference in the lives of their students. Whether it is coaxing the reluctant reader, inspiring the math wiz, or nurturing the dreamer’s creativity, good teachers love working with children and enjoy the connections that come with being an educator.

One cannot succeed as an educator without a kind and generous heart because the work of the teacher does not end with the close of the school day. The after hours of a teacher require more than grading papers, planning lessons, or learning a new subject or instructional method. Teachers are role models. Young children delight in seeing their teachers in the grocery store, public library, or at a community event. Even middle- and high-schoolers gain a sense of grounding when they know that their teachers are part of the world outside of school. How a teacher lives and plays in the community matters to students. To think that one of their teachers heard their speech, saw them in the park, or witnessed their great performance on the athletic field or stage provides our students with connections that can last a lifetime.

There are standards for good teaching, and Wisconsin has embodied them in the Quality Educator Initiative, PI 34, which outlines how we recruit and retain educators for our schools. Those standards ensure that teachers licensed in Wisconsin

- know the subjects they are teaching,
- know how children grow,

(more)

- understand that children learn differently,
- know how to teach,
- know how to manage a classroom,
- communicate well,
- are able to plan different kinds of lessons,
- know how to test for student progress,
- are able to evaluate themselves, and
- are connected with other teachers and the community.

The source of all good teaching is the human heart. Teaching is a career that is both demanding and rewarding. During Teacher Appreciation Week, May 7-13, please join me in reflecting on the importance of our teachers and the community's role in supporting their efforts to educate our children, helping to build a brighter future one student at a time.

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Elizabeth Burmaster is the elected state superintendent of public instruction.

NOTE: To download a high resolution photo of the state superintendent, visit the Department of Public Instruction "Media Contacts and Resources" webpage at < <http://dpi.wisconsin.gov/eis/vm-media.html> >.